

wings held half-open and drooping, so that the tips of the primaries brush the ground (Urban *et al.* 1986).

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Two heterosexual displays of the Black-faced Sandgrouse *Pterocles decoratus*

Nothing is apparently known of the heterosexual displays of the Black-faced Sandgrouse *Pterocles decoratus*, and this is true also of most of the other members of its family, the Pteroclididae (Urban *et al.* 1986, Cramp & Simmons 1985). This note describes two displays performed by presumed pairs of this species in the Samburu area of northern Kenya. Both observations were made between late July and late August, which is within the June–August breeding peak for sandgrouse in this region (Brown & Britton 1980).

In the first of these displays, the female was sitting motionless on the ground when the male, starting from *c.* 1.5 m away, walked straight towards her, head on, continually bowing and lifting his head in a slow, deliberate fashion. When next to the female, the male raised the front part of his body and held his neck and head up vertically, so that his bill pointed skywards. This posture was held for about 10 seconds, after which the male walked away. The whole display was silent. The female remained motionless throughout, and she was later found not to be sitting on eggs.

Male sandgrouse carry water to their young in their belly feathers and, except for the vertically pointed bill, the upright posture of this male was similar to the stance that they adopt when they wish their young to drink (see Cramp & Simmons 1985, p. 256 Fig. B, and Burton 1985 p. 72). This might suggest some kind of ritualized presentation of the drinking feathers by the male. Another feature of this display is that it strongly emphasizes the male's black throat streak which, together with the upwards-pointing bill, make a visually striking, vertically linear feature.

Two similar displays are mentioned in the meagre literature on this aspect of sandgrouse. Pairs of the Yellow-throated Sandgrouse *P. gutturalis* perform bobbing movements while facing each other that are presumed to constitute courtship (Urban *et al.* 1986), and the display of Pallas' Sandgrouse *Syrrhaptes paradoxus* includes the raising of the front part of the body (Cramp & Simmons 1985).

The display performed by a second pair of Black-faced Sandgrouse involved a male walking silently and rapidly in pursuit of a female, with his head and tail lowered and his neck inflated. This produced an effect very like the courtship display of a male dove *Streptopelia* sp., and may have a similar function. Such dove-like movements are also known in the Pin-tailed *P. alchata* and Pallas' Sandgrouse (Cramp & Simmons 1985, Urban *et al.* 1986).

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The Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica* in South-West Ethiopia

The Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica* is an endemic sedentary species ranging from Senegal east to Burundi, Rwanda (one record), north-eastern Tanzania, Uganda and southern Sudan (Fry, Keith & Urban 1988) inhabiting areas near water up to 1800 m. The species has not been recorded previously in Ethiopia (Urban & Brown 1971).

At least two Blue-breasted Kingfishers have been observed repeatedly between January and May 1989 in the Legedema River (1400 m altitude), a tributary of the Didessa River in Welega, Ethiopia. The Legedema was hardly flowing at the time and the main items in the bird's diet were probably tadpoles, very abundant in the stream's small pools.

The Blue Nile's tributaries, such as the Dedessa, have carved deep river valleys which dissect the South-Western highlands joining the western lowlands towards the Sudan (Westphal 1975). The habitat similarities between these river valleys and the lowlands were stressed by Urban & Brown (1971) by grouping them under the same geographical area, "Western Ethiopia".

Although the Blue-breasted Kingfisher has so far been sighted only in this area of Ethiopia, it may also inhabit the Didessa River itself and probably other similar rivers found in the region, expanding its previously reported range.

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